

claiming that there were three Zolas, the author of "La Terre," the author of "Le B \S ve," and the author of "La Débâcle"; for they were still so far from the truth, so unable to grasp the significance of the Bougon-Macquart series as a whole, that they could only explain the latter works by picturing some wonderful change in the novelist. Had they looked into the matter more closely they would have found "Le B \S ve," with all its mysticism and poetry, followed by one of Zola's most naturalist volumes, "La Bête Humaine," which alone, by reason of its place in the series, demonstrated the fallacy of their assumption. But as Vizetelly pointed out, they, and English people generally, had to be taken as they were. The position had certainly improved, and Zola's presence in London might well make it better still, for in conversation as well as in his speeches he might be able to clear up many misunderstandings. At the same time it was proper to bear in mind that the Institute of Journalists had members in all parts of the country, and Vizetelly did not know how far the provincial districts might share the views of the London district, whence the invitation had emanated. Personally he was very much in favour of Zola accepting it, but he would make some inquiries before anything further was done. Zola himself thought that course advisable, for he at once replied: "If I did not immediately answer the invitation it was precisely because I felt

some what distrustful, though it is difficult to believe that they have invited me with the intention of receiving me badly. I do not wish the English to press to promise it will sing my praises, but I should like to be quite certain it will be polite while

I am
its guest. Please make the inquiries you
propose, and tell
me frankly what you think of the situation."
And he added

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